

## **REMARKS**

### **General**

The present is in response to the Office Action dated December 1, 2006, where the Examiner has rejected Claims 1-10, 12, 13, 15 and 16; objected to Claims 11 and 14; and withdrawn Claims 17-27. Accordingly, Claims 1-27 are pending in the present application. By this amendment, Claims 1 and 13 have been amended and Claims 11-12 and 14 have been canceled. Allowance of pending Claims 1-10, 13, 15 and 16 in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

### **Status of the Claims**

Claims 1-10, 12, 13, 15 and 16 are rejected by the Examiner.

Claims 11 and 14 are objected to by the Examiner.

Claims 17-27 have been withdrawn.

#### **By this amendment:**

Claims 1 and 13 have been amended.

Claims 11, 12 and 14 have been canceled.

### **Response to rejection of Claims 1-10, 12, 13, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) or in the alternative §103(a)**

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-10, 12, 13, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) or in the alternative 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over various references. Applicants respectfully contend that Claims 1-10, 13, 15 and 16 have either been canceled or rewritten to incorporate the limitations of original base Claim 1 and original Claim 11 or original Claim 13

and original Claim 14. Thus, Applicants contend that the remaining Claims fully comply with 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

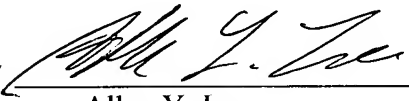
### Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-10, 12, 13, 15 and 16 are now in condition for allowance.

No Additional Fees for this response are necessary.

Respectfully submitted,

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